

FINAL



WEARE BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MEETING MINUTES
April 28, 2008

PRESENT: TOM CLOW, CHAIRMAN; WENDY CLARK, VICE CHAIRMAN; HELEEN KURK, SELECTMAN; RICHARD W. BUTT, SELECTMAN; KEITH R. LACASSE, SELECTMAN

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR: Fred Ventresco

RECORDING SECRETARY: Cherry Palmisano

GUESTS: Chief Begin, Chief Richards, Carl Knapp, Jane Snyder

6:45 p.m. Chairman Clow called the meeting to order.

Chairman Clow called the meeting to order. The Selectmen along with Mr. Carl Knapp went outside to review the location of the new Town Office Building sign and flag pole.

MANIFESTS

Chairman Clow moved, Selectman Kurk seconded, to authorize the Board of Selectmen to sign Manifest and order the Treasurer or Deputy Treasurer to sign checks dated May 1, 2008. Passed 4-0-1.

Accounts payable	\$91,736.13
	\$2,228.02
Gross Payrolls	<u>\$31,066.62</u>
Total	\$125,030.77

Chairman Clow said there are 3 department heads present and the Board is looking for their input with the default budget and unusually high winter expenses. Chairman Clow said he knows department heads were concerned when the Board asked them to limit spending. Chairman Clow said they want to include everyone in the process.

Selectman Butt said he was taken back by comments made by Chief Begin at a previous meeting and did not understand the comments made regarding trust. Selectman Butt said he read the email from Mr. Ventresco regarding the staff meeting and didn't see anything in the email that concerned trust. Selectman Butt feels it was reasonable to ask department heads to control spending and just expend what was necessary to run their departments. Selectman Butt wants the air cleared concerning any trust issues. Selectman Butt commented on reviewing the Manifest and has questions on some items. Selectman Butt would like to ask department heads how the Board's request to control spending affected the day to day operations of their budgets.

Mr. Knapp said speaking for his own department, it did not affect them; they were still in winter gear and plowing snow. Mr. Knapp said it was taken differently in the staff meeting than how it came out in the email. Mr. Knapp said at the meeting they were told not to go to any classes and there was to be no spending. Mr. Knapp said it was cleared up. Mr. Knapp said his budgets are the largest from any budgets and feels they need to work together and move forward. Mr. Knapp feels it is his job to explain things when asked about his budget.

Selectman Butt asked Mr. Knapp if he had any questions on the Warrant. Mr. Knapp said he would like to see them work harder on what is included in the default and what is not. He said the grader is sitting on blocks because they need tires; it will over expend his line to purchase the tires. Mr. Knapp does not know how that is

FINAL

defined as default because trucks need tires and they should be in the default line. Mr. Knapp said basic maintenance on vehicles and fuel are needed to keep vehicles up and running.

Chairman Clow said in dealing with next year's budget they need to make some decisions on how to get the Highway Department through the year. Chairman Clow asked Mr. Knapp to put together a bottom line figure to get through until January. Chairman Clow commented on not knowing where they are with salt. Mr. Knapp said all maintenance lines have gone through the roof. Chairman Clow said they will then have to decide if they go to DRA or possibly going the same route as the school and have a revote but they need a figure to work with to build a case.

Selectman Lacasse commented on the possibility of needing to plow in November and December and assuming they would not get emergency funding through DRA what could be done to help the budget now. Selectman Lacasse said he noticed the summer hours at the Transfer Station and asked if they could reduce the hours. Mr. Knapp commented on the overtime from the Transfer Station being due to the employees cannot leave until all the cars are gone, which usually isn't until 3:30. Mr. Knapp said they could close the transfer station at 3:00 which would give the employees a 30 minute timeframe to close the Transfer Station. He knows they have the most available hours to the public in the area. Mr. Knapp said it is very busy on Saturdays. Selectman Lacasse asked Mr. Knapp if there was no other way to make up the funds could this be an option. Mr. Knapp said the Selectman can set the hours to what they see fit and asked the Board to keep in mind they have 2 full time positions there.

Selectman Lacasse commented on sand and salt and said he feels this is a sensitive discussion. Selectman Lacasse said the roads are always maintained with sand and salt for the winter and asked if the amount of sand and salt can be reduced. Mr. Knapp said it depends on how the town wants the roads cleared; if they want to limit the sand and salt they can certainly do that by the roads will not be bare. Mr. Knapp said sand is cheaper and they do mix 2 parts sand with 1 part salt. Mr. Knapp said if you can do with less sand and more salt it would be less cleanup.

Selectman Kurk commented on the Transfer Station closing to the public in the afternoon at 3:00 and how this would alleviate the need for overtime. Mr. Knapp said they may get complaints from the public and they need to be consistent with the hours and not go back and forth.

Selectman Kurk asked about the road side mowing for \$4,000. Mr. Knapp said they won't be doing the road side mowing but commented on the new machine having a mower. Selectman Kurk commented on people being upset when classes were cut and she would like to know how necessary the classes are. Mr. Knapp said there are some classes they need to attend to remain certified. Mr. Knapp planned on some classes himself to complete his Master's. Mr. Ventresco commented on the necessity of some of the classes to get their status with Primex.

Selectman Kurk mentioned office equipment. Mr. Knapp said there is very minimal office equipment, even their printer was donated. Selectman Kurk said in looking at last printout they have 22% left in the line for electricity. Mr. Knapp said they are not using any more electricity but the cost has increased. Mr. Knapp said they even eliminated electric space heaters. Mr. Knapp said the salt line is spent but there is enough with what there is in the shed and what is mixed with sand already for approximately 8 storms. Selectman Kurk said the printout says 10% left.

Vice Chairman Clark commented on the overtime as well and reducing the hours at the Transfer Station. Mr. Knapp said it is the winter overtime that is spent.

Chairman Clow said in looking at the hours for the Transfer Station it could be open to the public 7:00-3:00 and the 2 worker's could have until 3:30 to complete the day. Selectman Kurk said she knows it is not a lot of money for the overtime but every little bit will help. Selectman Butt said according to the numbers he is

FINAL

disturbed about asking Mr. Knapp to cut from a practical standpoint and said it will be very difficult to find \$150,000 in the budget.

It was discussed there is 68% of the Police Department budget left and Highway Department only has 53%. Selectman Butt is concerned with what Mr. Knapp could be asked to cut and feels it is unrealistic. Selectman Butt said he will not ever say to put less salt on the roads or salt every other day. Mr. Knapp said when you look at the size of the salt line and use the logic that you should have 70% of your budget left keeping in mind the majority of the winter season is over. Mr. Knapp said the price for salt goes up in September. Mr. Knapp said the Highway Department overtime is beyond spent as well.

Selectman Lacasse said they are just trying not to exasperate the problem and trying to nickel and dime helps.

Chairman Clow said what they have to do is bring forth ideas and these ideas should be coming from Mr. Knapp. The Board needs to know what Mr. Knapp needs to make it through the year. It is unforeseen what flood season will bring and how much snow will fall in Nov- Dec. Chairman Clow asked Mr. Knapp to go through his budget and see how to make things work and then the Board can make decisions on what they need to do. Chairman Clow asked Mr. Knapp to suggest to the Board what needs to be done.

Selectman Kurk is concerned with the route of going to DRA, they need to see what they have done and she feels they need to make every effort to make it work or DRA will not allow them to spend the funds. Chairman Clow disagrees because he feels the issue is not the default budget the issue was what needed to be spent in the first 3 months of this year's winter and feels this is the best route to take with getting funding from DRA. Selectman Butt said he thinks DRA will appreciate the town working in a default budget and not being able to come up with \$75,000.00. Selectman Butt feels that when the Department Heads leave tonight they need to identify what they need to make up because of the winter and what the town will have to do without and how much funds are needed to go through the year. The Board can then take that number to DRA. Mr. Knapp said one thing that the fuel costs have done is drive the cost of everything up.

Mr. Knapp said they are conserving fuel as much as they can, sending crews out for specific jobs with only specific equipment. Selectman Butt said they are asking Mr. Knapp to look at his budget to see if he can make adjustments, they are not asking other departments to look into their budgets at this point. Selectman Butt hopes the Board feels it is the right direction to go in asking Mr. Knapp to review his budget and come back with a specific figure.

Vice Chairman Clark asked Mr. Ventresco if they have ever gone to DRA. Mr. Ventresco said he does not believe so. Mr. Ventresco said there is paperwork involved; written justification stating why the funds are needed and they need to hold a public hearing. Mr. Ventresco said severe winter weather, high fuel costs and a default budget are all playing a part for the need for the funds. Mr. Ventresco commented on the town needing to wait until the middle of the year before requesting funds. Vice Chairman Clark said she brought this up because if the department heads are on the spending restriction and have overtime in another department, how would DRA look at this. The Highway Department is not the only department that has had overtime spending. Vice Chairman Clark said she is not sure what DRA looks for and is unsure if they look at overtime in other departments.

Mr. Ventresco said they will rely on Department Heads for information because they need notice before taking action regarding going to DRA. Chairman Clow asked Mr. Knapp to have the figure ready for May 19th. Mr. Knapp said he did get word today that it looks like Abijah bridge is going to happen and will need equipment rented. They have been working to get the bridge approved by the state for 4 years.

Selectman Kurk said the Board is responsible for the bottom line and even though it is Mr. Knapp's budget that is being affected, she feels they might need to look to other departments. Selectman Butt asked what you will ask them to cut. Mr. Knapp said he cannot make it through the year on the Highway Department's budget. Selectman Butt said it is too early to tell.

FINAL

Mr. Knapp commented on people asking why Lake Horace is being lowered. Mr. Knapp said the dam is being repaired and until the repairs are completed it will not be raised.

Chief Begin said his department will be over spent as well in the overtime line. Chairman Clow commented on the Police Department working on last year's budget as well. Chief Begin commented on Officer Quigley being in the Academy and they need to cover his shift with overtime on Sundays. They have been painfully trying to keep the overtime down. Chief Begin commented on the only thing he could cut at this time is the Patriotic Celebration which is a \$3,000 overtime cost for his department. Selectman Butt asked if Chief Begin would consider cutting coverage for the Patriotic Celebration because there is not enough for the whole year or just trying to keep expenses down. Chief Begin said things are that close and commented on even his printer and vacuum cleaner need to be replaced, vacations need to be covered and they can't go without units on the road.

Chairman Clow commented on the winter weather and there seems to be more overtime through the winter for the Police Department. Chief Begin said his is unsure if the winter played a role; their overtime is due more to unforeseen incidents like arson and motor cycle accidents. Selectman Butt said right now the budget seems ok and asked Chief Begin if he would have a better idea in a couple of months. Chief Begin said they should know by June where their budget sits. Chief Begin said the last few weekends they have been getting hit hard with different cases.

Chief Begin said part of him says he can cut and cut, but they have been cutting for many years. He hopes they can go to DRA to show the public how bad things are working such a long time with default budgets has really caught up to the town. Selectman Kurk asked how will he make it and what will he need to get through the year. It was discussed Chief Begin will return in June to give a clearer picture of his budget. Chief Begin is not sure where he could cut anything from his budget. Selectman Lacasse would like to see all the ideas, good and bad.

Vice Chairman Clark asked Chief Begin if he had got the 1-2 more officers he requested would this of cut down the overtime. Chief Begin said the overtime line would go down but you would have salaries for those new officers. Chief Begin said the 3 pm to 11 pm shift on the weekends is getting bombed every night. Domestic incidents take 2 officers and if there was a motor vehicle complaint or accident then there is no one to cover.

Selectman Butt has concerns with the Manifest. He has noticed the cell phone monthly bill of \$298 for the Police Department and then because they go above the minutes an additional charge of \$328. Chief Begin said he hadn't noticed and commented on usually being contacted on over usage; he will look into this. Selectman Butt commented on vehicle maintenance and said Mr. Knapp can perform service on vehicles but he has seen invoices going to private dealerships and shops which are relatively expensive. Selectman Butt would like a process put in place so Mr. Knapp is contacted first. Chief Begin commented on some services with engine problems that Mr. Knapp is unable to perform. Some Police Department vehicles have a warranty with Grappone Ford. Mr. Knapp commented on them being required in 2009 to have a machine that tells about emissions problems, to lease this equipment \$50.00 per month.

Vice Chairman Clark asked if an officer who is part of the union takes vacation before it is actually allowed to them, how does this work and how is it allowed. Chief Begin said this has always been back practice; it is not part of the contract. Vice Chairman Clark commented on the person leaving employment and not paying back the hours. Chief Begin said they would have to wait before hiring to replenish the salary line. Vice Chairman Clark feels if they don't have the time allotted to them they should not be able to take it.

Selectman Butt spoke about the warrant and the level of support provided to the Police Department and asked what more the Police Chief could do to get support. Selectman Butt said there is a formula which seems pretty straight forward to determine the number of officers needed for the population. Selectman Butt knows some Board members did not vote to recommend this request on the warrant but said he did not hear any reason why the request was not supported by some Board members. Selectman Butt asked what else the Police Chief could do to prove he needs what is requested. Selectman Butt feels if an educated law enforcement officer came to the

FINAL

Board with the request of what was needed and it was not supported by the Board it does effect the voters' decision.

Vice Chairman Clark said being the first year going through budget she had it in her head there would be no new hires, and she was just looking at the numbers. She said looking back now, when times are tough that is probably when you need more law enforcement. She commented on during budget season it is hard because they are looking at numbers. Vice Chairman Clark does not really understand the need to have an article recommended or not.

Chairman Clow commented on articles requiring the Board's recommendations. Mr. Ventresco said no, just Special Warrant Articles need to be recommended or not. Chairman Clow said in looking at past practice if they suddenly made no recommendations he does not feel this would have a positive impact. Mr. Ventresco commented on this being done but officially it is not required.

Chairman Clow said what Vice Chairman Clark said is correct they focus on the budget and feel if they are conservative enough you will pass the proposed budget. Vice Chairman Clark said coming in early in the process before they are looking hard at numbers would be beneficial.

Chief Begin commented on not knowing the Board was not recommending his request for additional officers until he read it somewhere. Chief Begin said there needs to be a way to present it in July and then have them return in a month and for fine tuning, or call a meeting with all Department Heads present and ask them what they think. Chairman Clow feels the process really does need review. Chairman Clow commented on wanting Mr. Ventresco to work closely with Ms. Pelletier and he did. Chairman Clow said they need to see the justification for the requests within the budget and would like the process cleaned up. It was discussed to start the process earlier with draft revisions would help.

Vice Chairman Clark said they have all been here long enough to be able to forecast what is needed in the budget. Chairman Clow said in all fairness the departments did have a tight timeframe.

Selectman Butt feels they spend too much time nickel and diming the operating budget.

Chief Begin broke down the \$9,136.00; lap top in cruiser and stand, stand in Expedition and I cop- in car camera \$1,500 (\$2,500 to be recouped through a grant) \$48,325 for 2 vehicles, \$10,500 for equipment installation for 2 vehicles, radar \$962.50 - \$1,250 for new light bar. \$37,000 plus \$2,500 will be needed for the towers in the communication fund. Chairman Clow asked if there purchases were already approved; vehicles were approved.

Vice Chairman Clark moved, Selectman Butt seconded to allow the Police Department to expend \$9,136 out of the Police Communication Fund for a group mobile laptop \$4,036 and I-cop cameras for \$5,100. Passed 5-0-0.

Vice Chairman Clark moved, Chairman Clow seconded to allow the Police Department to expend \$13,675 out of the Police Cruiser Fund; \$10,500 for equipment install from Adams Industries, \$1,925 for radar from Custom Electronics and \$1,250 for a light bar. Passed 5-0-0.

Chairman Clow said this money is coming from Capital Reserve Funds voted on by the voters.

Selectman Butt would like to make a motion to lift the spending restrictions.

Chief Begin said he has been extremely conservative and understood the restrictions and said he has been conserving for many years. Chief Begin feels that him coming in before the Board and blowing his stack was helpful.

Vice Chairman Clark said they have 2 letters commending Lt Carney and Officer Kelley for their work.

Chief Richards said he does always try to utilize Mr. Knapp to repair their vehicles, but there are times they need to go outside to have the repairs done.

FINAL

Chief Richards said his budget is quite different, they can't say they can't go on the call. Chief Richards said he had a crew, Captain, himself working for 17 hours.

Selectman Kurk mentioned the forestry truck and said work is starting to need to be done on the truck. Chief Richards said this was a used vehicle.

Selectman Butt commented on the request from the Fire Department coming in a little late after the warrant was put together and how Chief Richards brought in New Boston's Fire Chief and letters being brought forth regarding problems with mutual aid. Selectman Butt said he is assuming the request will come again. Chief Richards plans on giving the Board a quarterly plan on what calls they could get to and which calls they could not. Chief Richards spoke with President/VP of NH Fire Chiefs and asked for advice. Chief Richards said the Board will see a formal report from the NH Fire Chiefs. Selectman Butt asked if it would be fair to do a comparison to other towns our size. Chief Richards said he has the information. Selectman Butt asked what the level of support was from the Board of Fire Wards and said he does not see anything to indicate that there is support. Chief Richards said what ever information the BOS sees the Fire Wards sees first.

Mr. Knapp said he hopes Chief Begin answered the question about cutting back the over time in the winter and takes it as a compliment for the Highway Department as to the conditions they keep the roads in the winter.

Selectman Kurk thanked Ms. Snyder for her service and availability; the Treasurer will be returning shortly.

Vice Chairman Clark thanked the Fire Department for being present for 17 hours during the arson incident, especially since they are volunteers.

Chairman Clow commented at the last meeting Representative Kurk spoke about representation in Weare and trying to get the Legislature to follow the Constitution. Chairman Clow asked Board members to sign in support. It was discussed the Attorney is retained by NH legal rights and there will be no legal fees will be paid by the town. Chairman Clow is willing to sign. Selectman Butt declines signing.

Selectman Lacasse moved, Chairman Clow seconded to accept the letter as written. Passed 4-1-0.

Selectman Butt asked Selectman Kurk if there was a conflict with her signing in support because her husband is a State Representative. Selectman Kurk said it has nothing to do with him being a State Representative. Selectman Butt feels in 2 years they will have a redistricting because of the census and feels this will not accomplish anything and have no impact on this coming election. Chairman Clow said the purpose is to try and get the representation and with this the hope is it will be done faster.

Chairman Clow said they need to sign the Manifest on Monday, May 26th which is the legal Memorial Day. The Board discussed holding the Manifest meeting on Friday May 23rd at 4:30 p.m.

Vice Chairman Clark said she was going through payables and payroll and understands the Police Department overtime and Mr. Knapp's overtime and asked if overtime is supposed to be approved beforehand. Mr. Ventresco said it needs to be approved by the department head. The Board will discuss the issue next week in a non public session.

Selectman Butt would like to place the Building Committee discussion on next week's agenda.

ADJOURNMENT 9:10 p.m.

A True Record.

Cherry Palmisano, Recording Secretary